

Poetry.

DEAR GOD, IT IS I.

S. B. M'ANUS.

Dear God, dost thou feel on thy white garments' hem
The touch of a trembling and faltering hand?
Dost thou see loving Christ of lone Bethlehem,
One kneeling to thee on the hot burning sand?
Canst thou see, kindly Father, the tears falling fast?
Dost thine ear catch the sound of a heart-troubled cry?
O God, one has come to thee calling at last,
On my head lay thy hand; it is I, it is I.
My heart hath reached out to the world for its love,
For its blessings of riches, its honors and fame,
But now it hath come to the Ark as a dove
With no tidings of rest or joy to proclaim;
And here at thy feet I could lay my bruised heart;
Wilt thou mercifully hear now my sorrowing cry.
And give me for the world that sweet better part?
Dost thou hear me, dear Father? It is I, it is I.
I have come with my hands bruised and aching with pain,
I have come with my soul heavily weighed with its grief,
I have come with my life with its sin and its stain,
I have come with my arms empty e'en of a sheaf;—
Canst thou love, blessed Christ, one unworthy, one unclean?
Canst thou care for one sinking and ready to die?
Canst thou lead by still waters and sweet pastures green
A child gone astray so unworthy as I?

Contributions.

SPIRITUALITY—WHAT IS IT?

JACOB C. CASSEL.

Webster defines it as "essence distinct from matter." Holy writ always refers to the Spirit as a *person*. From these two ideas, we get the true conception of what spirituality is; it is God dwelling in man. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." I Cor. 3: 16. This passage is the key to the whole question. God, the Father, never left his throne; Christ, the Son, spent a season among men, but he has returned to the right hand of the Majesty on high to intercede for lost humanity, and the Spirit, the *essence* of both the Father and the Son appears to have no abiding place, other than the bodies of men.

There is a very prevalent idea in the world, that the Spirit is a mere outer influence by which men may be moved to a greater or lesser degree. To this misconception of the truth, is attributable the instability of so many professors of religion. Standing upon the sea-shore, one

may see a majestic wave apparently sweeping everything before it, all at once a counter wave strikes it, and the result is a whirl of confused waters. Here in the east we often read of the great western storms or "blizzards," traveling eastward, due here at such and such a time, but the fact of the matter is, they never reach us. Why? Because they are met by strong counter currents. Just so with such as regard the Holy Spirit, as simply an influence, or as an invisible, intangible, unknowable, incomprehensible something. While such may be firmly anchored to some fixed form or polity, they are unstable in their own inner life because they lack within them the only real power, and guiding force that God has conferred upon the children of men. Not so with those that have consciously abiding within them the real *essence* or personality of the Godhead. Such must of necessity partake of the unchangeable nature of God. They are not affected by "higher criticism" or lower criticism; they are "not moved by every wind of doctrine;" they are not deceived by the counterfeit power, piety and virtues of the devil. Moreover, they have a guiding star upon which they can depend, and by which they are led; and such as are fully conscious of the indwelling Spirit, stand still until the Lord *does* lead them. This is *spirituality* as taught in the Scriptures and as understood by holy men of God in all ages of the world.

Christ says, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, HE shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance." John 14: 26. It takes more than an influence to teach us all things and bring all things to our remembrance. "The Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, HE shall testify of me." John 15: 26. An influence may move us, it takes a *person* to testify. "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Romans 8: 9. Paul does not refer there to an influence, but to a person, and says if that person (Spirit) does not dwell in us, we are not in Christ, or are none of his.

Concerning the personal indwelling of the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit, some wiseacres of this faithless apostate age would tell us that these things only applied to the apostles or the apostolic age. If salvation only applies to the apostolic age, then the active forces of salvation may be relegated to that period, but if salvation was intended for all people, nations, and ages, all the forces, powers, machinery (so to speak) of salvation must be available to all men every

where; or else there would be partiality, injustice, and unfairness on the part of the Author of salvation. While theologians and theological schools deny much and confuse more, it is an incontrovertible fact that there is not a sentence in the Bible limiting or circumscribing in the least, any power, gift or blessing to any particular period in the Christian dispensation. On the other hand wherever, and whenever holy men and women of God have taken the Lord at his word, the same powers were manifested and the same blessings bestowed as through the apostolic age. This declaration is advisedly made and proofs will be adduced in a later contribution.

Now an application of the truth contended for in this article. Paul says if ye have not the Spirit (person or essence) of Christ, ye are none of his. Is it possible to have the personality, or essence of Christ dwelling within us, and not be conscious of it? What say you, reader? Again, is it possible to have the Spirit of God abiding within us and devote all, or nearly all our time, energy and means to the gratification of the flesh? This is a very momentous question. I shall therefore particularize upon it at some length.

Is it possible to have the Holy Ghost abiding within and live without communion with God by meditation, prayer, and reading of God's word? Will the Spirit abide within such as read anything under the sun but the Bible? Will he abide with such as spend their time in the frivolities of the world, or with such that think more of a bicycle than they do of God, or the church of God, or the Lord's day?

Will the Comforter abide with such as have their hearts fixed upon the fashions and follies of the world, who know more about the "styles" than about the sermon when they return from church? Will the Spirit dwell within those whose hearts are full of malice, or revenge, who only love such as first love them? Will he take up his abode with such as have their whole hearts centered upon the accumulation of money, or property, with whom the interest of the church, or missions is not even a side issue from a financial standpoint? Will the Spirit of God abide in the heart, where any species of impurity, dishonesty, or hatred is harbored? The Scriptures, as a whole, pronounce emphatic negatives to all these interrogatories. The few questions here propounded do not by any means cover the whole catalogue of reasons, why the Spirit of God does not more signally abide in the hearts of men, but they may be sufficient to set some thoughtless reader to thinking.

There is a delusive idea in the minds of